CLAIMS

I claim:

5   1. A method for sending electronic mail (e-mail), from a sender to a plurality of recipients, comprising:
receiving input from said sender specifying said recipients of an e-mail message; and
for each of said recipients, receiving input from said sender to create a tag indicating the importance of said e-mail message,
10   wherein said tags may vary from one of said recipients to another.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
providing a plurality of said tags with predefined content.

15   3. The method of claim 2, further comprising:
automatically providing default tags, in the absence of contrary input from said sender, wherein said default tags may vary according to the status of said recipients.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein said sender can compose the content of said tags.

20   5. A method for sending e-mail, from a sender to a plurality of recipients, comprising:
providing tags, to convey information about the importance of an e-mail message;
receiving input from said sender specifying said recipients of said e-mail message; and
for each of said recipients, receiving input from said sender specifying one of said tags to be
25   placed on said e-mail message,
wherein said tags may vary from one of said recipients to another.

6. The method of claim 5, further comprising:
automatically providing default tags, in the absence of contrary input from said sender, wherein
30   said default tags may vary according to the status of said recipients.

7. A method for providing e-mail services, said method comprising:
receiving input from a sender specifying a recipient of an e-mail message; and
communicating to said sender at least one of said recipient's preferences concerning e-mail
35   received by said recipient, before said e-mail message is transmitted to said recipient.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein said preferences concern the size of e-mail messages sent to said recipient.

40   9. The method of claim 7, wherein:
said preferences concern rating the importance of said e-mail message, and;
wherein said communicating further comprises:

providing said preferences as a set of menu entries to said sender;

receiving a menu entry selection signal from said sender; and

in response to said signal, tagging said e-mail message, to implement said preferences.

10. A method for providing e-mail services, said method comprising:

maintaining a database identifying at least one e-mail recipient and his or her corresponding preferences concerning e-mail received by said recipient; and

communicating at least one of said preferences to a sender of an e-mail message, before said e-mail message is transmitted to said recipient.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein said preferences concern the size of e-mail messages sent to said recipient.

12. The method of claim 10, wherein:

said preferences concern rating the importance of said e-mail message, and;

wherein said communicating further comprises:

providing said preferences as a set of menu entries to said sender;

receiving a menu entry selection signal from said sender; and

in response to said signal, tagging said e-mail message, to implement said preferences.

13. A system for sending e-mail, from a sender to a plurality of recipients, said system comprising:

means for receiving input from said sender specifying said recipients of an e-mail message; and

for each of said recipients, means for receiving input from said sender to create a tag indicating the importance of said e-mail message,

wherein said tags may vary from one of said recipients to another.

14. The system of claim 13, further comprising:

means for providing a plurality of said tags with predefined content.

15. The system of claim 14, further comprising:

means for automatically providing default tags, in the absence of contrary input from said sender, wherein said default tags may vary according to the status of said recipients.

16. The system of claim 13, wherein said sender can compose the content of said tags.

17. A system for providing e-mail services, said system comprising:

means for maintaining a database identifying at least one e-mail recipient and his or her corresponding preferences concerning e-mail received by said recipient; and

means for communicating at least one of said preferences to a sender of an e-mail message, before said e-mail message is transmitted to said recipient.

18. The system of claim 17, wherein said preferences concern the size of e-mail messages sent to

said recipient.

19. The system of claim 17, wherein:
said preferences concern rating the importance of said e-mail message, and;
wherein said means for communicating further comprises:
means for providing said preferences as a set of menu entries to said sender;
means for receiving a menu entry selection signal from said sender; and
means for tagging said e-mail message, in response to said signal, to implement said preferences.

20. A computer-usable medium having computer-executable instructions for sending e-mail, from a sender to a plurality of recipients, said computer-executable instructions comprising:
means for receiving input from said sender specifying said recipients of an e-mail message; and
for each of said recipients, means for receiving input from said sender to create a tag indicating the importance of said e-mail message,
wherein said tags may vary from one of said recipients to another.

21. The computer-usable medium of claim 20, further comprising:
means for providing a plurality of said tags with predefined content.

22. The computer-usable medium of claim 21, further comprising:
means for automatically providing default tags, in the absence of contrary input from said sender, wherein said default tags may vary according to the status of said recipients.

23. The computer-usable medium of claim 20, wherein said sender can compose the content of said tags.

24. A computer-usable medium having computer-executable instructions, comprising:
means for maintaining a database identifying at least one e-mail recipient and his or her corresponding preferences concerning e-mail received by said recipient; and
means for communicating at least one of said preferences to a sender of an e-mail message, before said e-mail message is transmitted to said recipient.

25. The computer-usable medium of claim 24, wherein said preferences concern the size of e-mail messages sent to said recipient.

26. The computer-usable medium of claim 24, wherein:
said preferences concern rating the importance of said e-mail message, and;
wherein said means for communicating further comprises:
means for providing said preferences as a set of menu entries to said sender;
means for receiving a menu entry selection signal from said sender; and
means for tagging said e-mail message, in response to said signal, to implement said preferences.